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General and complete disarmament: preservation of and compliance with the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems

Letter dated 20 June 2002 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit the text of the statement of 14 June 2002 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation concerning the legal status of the Treaty between the Russian Federation and the United States on Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (see annex).

I should be grateful if this letter and the annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under item 67 (f) of the preliminary list.

(*Signed*) Sergei **Lavrov**

* A/57/50/Rev.1.

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Annex to the letter dated 20 June 2002 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation on the legal status of the Treaty between the Russian Federation and the United States on Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms

In May 2000, the Russian Federation ratified the Treaty between the Russian Federation and the United States on Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START II Treaty) and the New York memoranda of understanding of 26 September 1997 on the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. In this connection, there was a mutual understanding with the American side that the United States would do the same. This would have made it possible to put into effect these important agreements concerning the strategic offensive and defensive arms of the two countries.

However, the United States refused to ratify the START II Treaty and the New York memoranda of understanding. In addition, on 13 June 2002, the United States withdrew from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, with the result that this international legal instrument, which for three decades stood as the cornerstone of strategic stability, has ceased to be in force. In the light of these actions by the United States and on the basis of the provisions of the Federal Law on ratification of the START II Treaty, the Russian Federation notes that none of the prerequisites for the entry into force of the START II Treaty exist and no longer considers itself bound by the obligation under international law to refrain from actions that could deprive this Treaty of its object and goal.

14 June 2002